Nazis and Slavs: From Racial Theory to Racist Practice

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INCREASINGLY, historians have been turning their attention to the effects of Nazi racism.[1] In recent years major studies have appeared on forced sterilization, euthanasia, theft of "racially valuable" children, and "antinatalism," as well as the destruction of "racially undesirable" groups: the handicapped, certain foreign laborers, and homosexuals.[2]

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1. Ulrich Herbert has defined racism as a "self-contained and consistent worldview, claiming to offer a cogent and all-embracing explanation for developments, contradictions, and problems in human society. Moreover, it proposes to elucidate events not on the basis of myths or superstition, but the postulates of natural science. In essence, racism can be paraphrased as the "'biologizing of society.'" "Racism and Rational Calculation: The Role of 'Utilitarian' Strategies of Legitimation in the National Socialist 'Weltanschauung'" in *Yad Vashem Studies* 24 (Jerusalem, 1994): 135.

2. Michael Burleigh and Wolfgang Wippermann, *The Racial State: Germany 1933–1945* (Cambridge, 1991); Detlev J. K. Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany: Conformity, Opposition, and Racism in Everyday Life* (New Haven, 1987); Robert N. Proctor, *Racial Hygience: Medicine under the Nazis* (Cambridge, MA and London, 1988); Götz Aly, Peter Chroust, and Christian Pross, eds. *Cleansing the Fatherland: Nazi Medicine and Racial Hygiene*, transl. Belinda Cooper, (Baltimore, 1994); Gisela Bock, *Zwangssterilisation im Nationalsozialismus: Studien zur Rassenpolitik und Frauenpolitik* (Opladen, 1986); Georg Lilienthal, *Der "Lebensborn e.V.": Ein Instrument nationalsozialistischer Rassenpolitik* (Frankfurt am Main, 1993); Gisela Bock, "Antinatalism, Maternity, and Paternity in National Socialist Racism," in *Nazism and German Society 1933–1945*, ed. David F. Crew (London and New York, 1994), 110–40; Michael Burleigh, *Death and Deliverance: "Euthanasia" in Germany 1900–1945* (Cambridge, 1994); Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews*, vol. 1, *The Years of Persecution, 1933–1939* (New York, 1997); Marion A. Kaplan, *Between Dignity and Despair: Jewish Life in Nazi Germany* (New York, 1998); Michael Zimmermann, *Rassenutopie und Genozid: Die nationalsozialistische "Lösung der Zigeunerfrage"* (Hamburg, 1960; Ulrich Herbert, *Hitler's Foreign Workers: Enforced Labor in Germany under the Third Reich* (Cambridge, 1997); Burkhard Jellonnek, *Homosexuelle unter dem Hakenkreuz: Die Verfolgung von Homosexuellen im Dritten Reich* (Paderborn, 1990). For a copious listing of recent work on Nazi racism see Steven T. Katz, "The Holocaust: A Very Particular Racism," in *The Holocaust and History: The Known, the Unknown, the Disputed, and the Reexamined*, ed. Michael Berenbaum and Abraham J. Peck (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1998), 61–63.

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With the exception of studies on the Jews and Gypsies, however, relatively little attention has been paid to ways in which racism drove Nazi policy toward groups outside Germany.[3] This is also true of recent work on Eastern Europe, which mostly neglects the long-term racial impulses behind Nazi policy.[4] One influential school of interpretation relegates racism in Nazi policies in Eastern Europe to secondary importance, and argues that plans for the New Order sprang from the ambitions of architects, agronomists, economists, and other "experts" seeking to realize a Nazi version of "modernity."[5]

At first glance, there seems to be good reason to doubt the explanatory force of racial ideology for the policies that emerged in Eastern Europe. Despite a general consensus that Slavs, along with Jews and Gypsies, were among the most menaced groups in this region, policies toward Slavs suggest an erratic relation between ideology and practice, and appear, in Czesław Miłosz's words, to be "nonsense" when viewed in retrospect.[6] On the one hand Poles, Ukrainians, White Russians, Russians, and Serbs were subjected to the cruelest barbarity, yet on the other the Bulgarians, Slovaks, and Croats, became allies and puppets. Yet much of the literature suggests some deeper Nazi aversion to "Slavs" to explain policies adopted in Eastern Europe; characteristic is a statement of Polish historian Czesław Pilichowski that a "main goal of the war" was to "gradually denationalize and destroy the Slavic peoples, who were described as 'inferior' and 'subhumans' in Nazi racial ideology."[7] The foremost expert

3. This point has been made in regard to the relation between eugenics and foreign policy by Paul Weindling, "Understanding Nazi Racism: Precursors and Perpetrators," in *Confronting the Nazi Past: New Debates on Modern German History*, ed. Michael Burleigh (New York, 1996), 76. A major recent study on Nazi imperialism includes only a very brief consideration of the issue of race. See Woodruff D. Smith, *The Ideological Origins of Nazi Imperialism* (New York, Oxford, 1986), 91–92. The best systematic general treatment of Nazi policy toward Eastern Europe remains Norman Rich, *Hitler's War Aims: The Establishment of the New Order*, vol. 2 (London, 1974). For the prewar period see Gerhard L. Weinberg, *The Foreign Policy of Hitler's Germany: Diplomatic Revolution in Europe 1933–36* (Chicago and London, 1970).

4. Major studies of Nazi plans for Eastern Europe, the Generalplan Ost of the SS, do not consider prewar origins. See Helmut Heiber, "Der Generalplan Ost," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 6 (1958): 281–325; Mechthild Rössler and Sabine Schleiermacher, eds., *Der "Generalplan Ost": Hauptlinien der nationalsozialistischen Planungs- und Vernichtungspolitik* (Berlin, 1993); Rolf-Dieter Müller, *Hitlers Ostkrieg und die deutsche Siedlungspolitik* (Frankfurt am Main, 1981); Czesław Madajczyk, ed., *Vom Generalplan Ost zum Generalsiedlungsplan* (Munich, 1994).

5. Götz Aly and Susanne Heim, *Vordenker der Vernichtung: Auschwitz und die deutschen Pläne für eine neue europäische Ordnung* (Hamburg, 1991); for the major theoretical statement: Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Ithaca, 1989).

6. Czesław Miłosz, *Native Realm: A Search for Self-definition*, transl. from the Polish by Catherine S. Leach (Berkeley, 1981), 231.

7. Czesław Pilichowski, *Es gibt keine Verjährung* (Warsaw, 1980), 11. W. W. Kulski has written that "The war, which started as a war against Poland, turned into a general war

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on losses to Polish science during the war has written that "Hitlerism" attempted to realize its goals "at the cost of Central and Eastern Europe, mainly of Slavs, but above all of Poland. Hitler expressed this as early as 1925 in *Mein Kampf*."[8] When one examines the early writings of Adolf Hitler and other Nazi leaders, however, one finds few signs of intentions toward Slavs. Especially noticeable in Hitler's writing is an absence of hostility toward Poles. If any Slavic people provoked Hitler's ill will it was the Czechs, about whom he had formed opinions as a young man in Austria.[9] Yet as will be shown, the Czechs survived the war in relative peace.

This article attempts to assess the relationship between ideology and practice in Nazi policies toward the Slavs, with special emphasis on Nazi understandings of race. It makes use of a heterodox mixture of classical interpretations of National Socialist policy in the East—especially Alexander Dallin, Norman Rich, and Gerhard L. Weinberg—writings and statements of leading Nazis from before and after 1939, and recent work of Central European authors.[10] Attention to the Slavs provides basic orientation in the Nazi racial world, and helps illustrate the unique position of the Jews: not only that there could be no compromise with them, but that this uncompromising approach grew out of a sort of racism unlike any other.[11] The Nazis did not conceive of Jews as existing within

against all Slavs." *Germany and Poland: From War to Peaceful Relations* (Syracuse, 1976), 39. Other interpretations projecting an axiomatic relation between Nazi aversion to "Slavs" and policies adopted during the war include Eugeniusz Duraczyński, *Wojna i okupacja wrzesień 1939-Kwiecień 1943* (Warsaw, 1974), 92; Jan T. Gross, *Polish Society Under German Occupation: The Generalgouvernement 1939–1944* (Princeton, 1979), xi; Wolfgang Jacobmeyer, "Der Überfall auf Polen und der neue Charakter des Krieges," in *September 1939: Krieg, Besatzung, Widerstand in Polen*, ed. Christoph Klessmann (Göttingen, 1989), 23–26; Jochen August, *"Sonderaktion Krakau": Die Verhaftung der Krakauer Wissenschaftler am 6. November 1939* (Hamburg, 1997), 15–18. For conflicting interpretations of the relation between ideology and occupation practice in the Czech lands see Miroslav Kárny; and Jaroslava Milotová, "Od Neuratha k Heydrichovi," *Sborník archivních prací* 39, no. 2 (1989), which rejects the claim of Vojtech Mastny that the early period of Nazi rule had been a time of "haphazard German improvisation." See Mastny, *The Czechs under Nazi Rule: The Failure of National Resistance* (New York and London, 1971), 187.

8. Marian Walczak, *Szkolnictwo wyższe i nauka polska w latach wojny i okupacji 1939–1945* (Wrocław, 1978), 24.

9. This fact is noted in Martin Broszat in *Zweihundert Jahre deutsche Polenpolitik* (Munich, 1963), 183; Christoph Klessmann, *Die Selbstbehauptung einer Nation: NS-Kulturpolitik und polnische Widerstandsbewegung* (Düsseldorf, 1971), 27–29; Jerzy W. Borejsza, *Antyslawizm Adolfa Hitlera* (Warsaw, 1988), 12–14; Mastny, *The Czechs under Nazi Rule*, 11.

10. This study has benefited especially from the important work by Polish historian Jerzy W. Borejsza, *Antyslawizm Adolfa Hitlera* (The Anti-Slavism of Adolf Hitler) (Warsaw, 1988). See also his "Racisme et antislavisme chez Hitler," in François Bédarida, *La politique nazie d'extermination* (Paris, 1989), 57–74.

11. On the uniqueness of Nazi anti-Semitism within the world of Nazi racism, see Erich Goldhagen, "Weltanschauung und Endlösung: Zum Antisemitismus der nationalsozialistischen Führungsschicht," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 24, no. 4 (1976): 379–405; Katz, "The

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historical structures, and therefore so-called structuralist approaches are of secondary importance in accounting for the decisions leading to the Holocaust of the Jews.[12] Hitler's Judeophobia was so ahistorical that it was independent even of the number of the Jews his own regime had killed.[13] Policies toward Slavs, with their constant improvisation, appear by contrast as a textbook case for structuralist and functionalist approaches. Opportunity and ideology shaped one another. Not coincidentally, one of the most forceful proponents of these approaches, Martin Broszat, began his career with studies of Poles and Croats in Nazi-dominated Europe.[14]

Contradictions

Like contemporary linguists and ethnographers, leading Nazis initially understood "Slavs" to be the speakers of Slavic languages. There were three major groups: the eastern Slavs (Russians, White Russians, Ukrainians), western Slavs (Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Lusatian Sorbs), and the southern Slavs (Bulgarians, Serbs, Croats, Macedonians, Slovenes). Enjoying perhaps the highest preference both before and after 1939 were the Bulgarians, whom Joseph Goebbels referred to as "friends."[15] The Germans did not impose a military occupation regime upon Bulgaria, and the Bulgarian government even managed to pursue an independent policy with regard to Bulgarian Jews. It retained greater control over domestic

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Holocaust," 56–63; George L. Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution: A History of European Racism* (Madison, 1985), 220–22.

12. Steven T. Katz has written: "Hitler's 'Jew' is *not* rooted in empirical realities, in how things are in the world." Emphasis in original. "The Holocaust," 60.

13. In his last military order of 15 April 1945, issued after 6 million Jews had been killed, Hitler instructed his troops that "the Jewish Bolsheviks have launched their massive forces to the attack. Their aim is to reduce Germany to ruins and to exterminate our people." Cited in Lucy S. Dawidowicz, *The War Against the Jews 1933–1945* (New York, 1986), 166; in the last sentence of his last will and testament, issued the day before his suicide, Hitler wrote "Above all I commit the leadership of the nation and my following to strict keeping of the racial laws and merciless opposition to the world poisoner of all peoples, international Jewry." Erich Goldhagen, "Weltanschauung," 384.

14. Martin Broszat, *Nationalsozialistische Polenpolitik 1939–1945* (Stuttgart, 1961); and coauthored with Ladislaus Hory, *Der kroatische Ustascha-Staat 1941–1945* (Stuttgart, 1964). One of Hans Mommsen's early studies was also devoted to Nazi policies in Eastern Europe. See his "Stellung, Aufgaben und Befugnisse der in den Ostgebieten eingesetzten Gebiets-Kommissare," in *Gutachten des IfZ München*, vol. 2 (Stuttgart, 1966). Cited in Diemut Majer, "Führerunmittelbare Sondergewalten in den besetzten Ostgebieten. Entstehung und Wirksamkeit," in *Verwaltung contra Menschenführung im Staat Hitlers*, ed. Dieter Rebentisch and Karl Teppe (Göttingen, 1986), 375.

15. In his diary entry of 14 December 1938 Joseph Goebbels referred to the Bulgarians as a "courageous people and also our friends." Elke Fröhlich., ed., *Die Tagebücher von Joseph Goebbels, sämtliche Fragmente*, part I, vol. 3., (Munich 1987), 548. In part the good relations can be attributed to Hitler's positive estimation of King Boris. Henry Picker, *Hitlers Tischgespräche im Führerhauptquartier* (Stuttgart, 1976), 135 (24 March 1942).

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and foreign policy during the war than any other country in Southeastern Europe, and kept diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union until September 1944, when that country declared war.[16]

Two other Slavic peoples were permitted to have their own puppet states: the Slovaks and the Croats. Within these states there were full native governments, police forces, education systems (including universities), and elite military units modeled on the SA and SS, alleging Slovak and Croatian racial superiority. Both states voluntarily instituted anti-Semitic legislation—including the "aryanization" of property—deportations, and in the Croat case, killing camps.[17] Croatian borders were extended to include Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the fascist Ustasha regime implemented policies of racist extermination against another Slavic people: the Serbs.[18] Within Germany, travel guides and picture books appeared during the war purporting to display the lives of the Slovaks and Croats, complete with smiling peasants dressed in native costumes.[19]

The Czechs fared worse under Nazi rule. In March 1939 post-Munich Czechoslovakia was divided, and the Czech/Moravian/Silesian part made into the Protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia. The Protectorate had to endure six years of German occupation, and the Czech intelligentsia, as the putative national leadership, suffered severe repression. Yet for the overwhelming majority of Czechs life went on in relatively normal fashion: businessmen continued making profits, the working class increased earnings due to wartime demand, and the birthrate edged upward.[20] The rations allotted to Czech workers were on a par with those of German workers.[21] Czech administration was kept intact to a degree that was unparalleled in Nazi-occupied Europe—with the possible exception of Denmark.[22] Though universities were closed, substantial publishing and

16. Rich, *Hitler's War Aims*, 258; Marshall Lee Miller, *Bulgaria during the Second World War* (Stanford, 1975).

17. See Hory and Broszat, *Der kroatische Ustascha-Staat 1941–1945*; Jörg K. Hoensch, "The Slovak Republic, 1939–1945," in Victor S. Mamatey and Radomir Luza, *A History of the Czechoslovak Republic 1918–1948* (Princeton, 1973).

18. Hory and Broszat, *Der kroatische Ustascha-Staat*, 93–106.

19. Ernst Tropper, *Slowakei: Land zwischen Ost und West* (Brno, Munich, Vienna, 1944); Wilhelm Feuring et al., eds., *Slowakei: Land und Leute* (Munich, 1944); Adolf Dresler, *Kroatien* (Essen, 1942), Emil Gärtner, *Kroatien in Südslawien: eine historisch-politische Studie* (Berlin, 1944); Erich Retzlaff, *Länder und Völker an der Donau: Rumänien, Bulgarien, Ungarn, Kroatien* (Vienna, 1944).

20. Zdeněk Sládek, "Vliv nacistické nadvlády na politický vývoj v Cechách a na Moravě'" *Soudobé dějiny* 1, nos. 4–5 (1994): 535; Mastny, *The Czechs under Nazi Rule*, 65–85; Gotthold Rhode, "The Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia 1939–1945," in Mamatey and Luza, eds. *A History of the Czechoslovak Republic 1918–1948*, 318–19.

21. Mastny, *The Czechs*, 82–84. Also: Detlev Brandes, *Die Tschechen unter deutschem Protektorat*, 2 vols. (Munich and Vienna, 1969–75).

22. Mastny, *The Czechs*, 101.

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education in the Czech language continued.[23] The Czech Academy of Arts and Sciences continued its meetings throughout the war, and received a budget for research from the Czech officials at the Protectorate Ministry of Education. The journal of the Prague linguistic circle, *Slovo a Slovesnost* (Word and Literature), appeared until 1943, and the Czech sociological society continued meetings and publishing until 1945. Likewise, the major philosophical journal *Česká Mysl* (The Czech Mind) received a budget and continued publishing throughout the war.[24]

Slavic groups living in the Soviet Union—Russians, White Russians, and Ukrainians—were subjected to policies of annihilation from the moment German troops crossed the Soviet boundaries in 1941.[25] Among the earliest victims of conquest were Bolshevik commissars, who were summarily executed, and millions of captured troops, who were starved to death.[26] The goal of occupation was short-term exploitation, both of foodstuffs and labor, and preparation for German settlement. Millions of Soviet citizens were transported to the Reich as slave laborers. The population that remained behind lived under conditions of semistarvation.[27] The brutality of the German occupation called forth almost immediate resistance, and in the words of Omer Bartov a "vicious cycle of violence and murder"

23. Czech students of medicine and technical sciences could study in Germany, though few took advantage of this option. A number of medical, scientific, and even historical and legal journals continued appearing in the Czech language throughout the war, as did Czech language editions of the works of Czech scholars such as Václav Richter and Zdeněk Kalista (art history), Jan Mukařovský (Czech literature), Josef Peskař (history). In 1943 alone 3 million copies of Czech language fiction, scientific, religious, and school texts appeared in the Protectorate. See Jiří Doležal, *Ceská kultura za protektorátu Školství, písemnictví, kinematografie* (Prague, 1996), 151.

24. See the "Výroční zpráva České společnosti sociologické," 28 June 1943, in Král papers, Czech Academy of Sciences, i.č. 654; reports on *Česká Mysl* in ibid., i.č. 661–62.

25. On White Russia see Bernard Chiari, "Deutsche Zivilverwaltung in Weissrussland, 1941–1944: Die lokale Perspektive der Besatzungsgeschichte," *Militärgeschichtliche Mitteilungen* 52, no. 1 (1993): 67–89; on Russia and Ukraine: Alexander Dallin, *German Rule in Russia 1941–1945* (New York, 1980); Gerald Reitlinger, *The House Built on Sand: The Conflicts of German Policy in Russia 1939–1945* (London, 1960); Ihor Kamenetsky, *Hitler's Occupation of Ukraine (1941–1944): A Study of Totalitarian Imperialism* (Milwaukee, 1956); John A. Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism, 1939–1945* (New York, 1955); Ryszard Torzecki, *Kwestia ukraińska w polityce III Rzeszy (1933–1945)* (Warsaw, 1972). Valuable specialized studies include Theo J. Schulte, *The German Army and Nazi Politics in Occupied Russia* (New York, 1989); Timothy Patrick Mulligan, *The Politics of Illusion and Empire: German Occupation Policy in the Soviet Union, 1942–1943* (New York, Westport, London, 1988). For a summary of research and extensive bibliography see Rolf-Dieter Müller and Gerd R. Ueberschär, *Hitler's War in the East 1941–1945: A Critical Assessment* (Providence, Oxford, 1997).

26. Christian Streit, *Keine Kameraden: Die Wehrmacht und die sowjetischen Kriegsgefangenen 1941–1945* (Stuttgart, 1978); Omer Bartov, *The Eastern Front 1941–45: German Troops and the Barbarisation of Warfare* (Basingstoke, 1985), 107–19.

27. The Germans were able to raise the level of production in the occupied areas to about 10 percent of the prewar total in industry, and 50 percent in agriculture. Müller and Ueberschär, *Hitler's War*, 309.

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evolved, with the Germans eradicating villages suspected of aiding partisans or withholding grain, and thereby further decreasing productivity, and driving more people into the underground.[28] These were territories which the Germans held for a shorter time than areas further west, but they made up in devastation what they lacked in duration of occupation: as the army withdrew, it evacuated inhabitants, and destroyed practically everything, from crops, to industrial equipment, to private dwellings.

As is well known, many Ukrainians had looked upon the Nazis as potential liberators, and leading Nazis toyed with the idea of permitting a Ukrainian state to emerge.[29] Hitler would have none of such plans, however, and placed most of Ukraine under the direction of East Prussian Gauleiter Erich Koch, who publicly emphasized his contempt for Ukrainians as "racial inferiors," and forbade his subordinates any social contact with them. As in other areas of occupied Eastern Europe, these subordinates were often former SA men with no training in administration, who saw their new posts as opportunities for self-enrichment.[30] One letter the Nazis confiscated lamented a situation "one hundred times worse" than under the Bolsheviks, yet such sentiments did not concern Koch, who vowed to "pump every last thing out of this country."[31] Considering the local inhabitants no better than animals, he literally hunted them in special reserves.[32] Despite the effect of fully alienating a potentially pro-German population, these policies were maintained to the end.[33]

Yet the situation of Ukrainians in the former Polish eastern territories (Galicia) differed significantly.[34] In 1939 the Germans tolerated the foundation of a Ukrainian Relief Committee (renamed in 1940 Ukrainian Central Committee) which oversaw a strengthening of Ukrainian social, cultural, educational, and economic organization within the General-

28. Any villages which partisans had visited were subject to obliteration. Bartov, *Eastern Front*, 119–41.

29. Reich minister of the occupied territories A. Rosenberg thought of Ukraine as a balance to Russia and Poland, and wanted to foster the Ukrainian language and Ukrainian literature and art, and establish a Ukrainian university in Kiev. All of this would take place in an independent Ukrainian state. Rich, *Hitler's War Aims*, 373–74; For Rosenberg's visions of Ukrainian policy, see his *Der Zukunftsweg einer deutschen Aussenpolitik* (Munich, 1927). Several leading officials, like Otto Bräutigam, supported a more liberal approach to the occupied territories. Jonathan Steinberg, "The Third Reich Reflected: German Civil Administration in the Occupied Soviet Union, 1941–44," *English Historical Review* (June 1995); 626–27. Other members of the Nazi elite who were less rigorous in their thinking on racial understanding of Ukrainians included Goering and Hans Frank. Borejsza, *Antyslawizm*, 97.

30. The administrators were called "Ostnieten" [Eastern losers] and "golden pheasants," because of the color of their uniforms. Chiari, "Deutsche Zivilverwaltung," 74.

31. Rich, *Hitler's War Aims*, 375–81.

32. Josef Ackermann, *Heinrich Himmler als Ideologe* (Göttingen, 1970), 211, n. 99.

33. Dallin, *German Rule*, 123–67; Müller and Ueberschär, *Hitler's War*, 305–7.

34. Ryszard Torzecki, *Polacy i Ukraińcy: sprawa ukraińska w czasie II wojny światoswej na terenie II Rzeczpospolitei* (Warsaw, 1993).

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gouvernement. Before the war there had been 2,510 Ukrainian language schools in this region; by 1942/43 the number had increased to 4,173, including several secondary schools. The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) offered scholarships for study in Germany to Ukrainian students. Furthermore, the economic position of many Ukrainians improved as the Germans permitted an expansion from 161 cooperatives in 1939 to 1,990 in 1941.[35] In April 1943 the Germans recruited a Ukrainian SS division (Galicia) and attracted 80,000 volunteers, of whom some 12,000 received training.[36]

Ukrainians in the Generalgouvernement enjoyed these relative "privileges" because the Germans hoped to play them off against the Poles.[37] Poland endured a Nazi regime of unsurpassed destruction longer than any other area in Europe.[38] Soon after crossing the Polish border in 1939 the Nazis began mass executions of Polish intellectuals and others considered potentially hostile to Germany.[39] The difference from policies toward the Czechs was so striking as to elicit the following boastful remark of the top German administrator in Poland, Hans Frank, who visited Prague early in 1940:

> There were large red posters in Prague announcing that today seven Czechs had been shot. I said to myself: if I wanted to hang a poster for every seven Poles that were shot, then all the forests in Poland would not suffice in order to produce the paper necessary for such posters.[40]

Throughout the war there was no Polish government or even administration above the level of municipality, and the Nazis imposed forced labor

35. Gross, *Polish Society*, 188–89.

36. Torzecki, *Polacy i Ukraińcy*, 247; Dallin, *German Rule*, 598. Himmler rationalized the recruiting of this division as a continuation of Habsburg military tradition, and tried to make use of former Austro-Hungarian army officers. Mulligan, *Politics of Illusion*, 156.

37. Using Ukrainians to displace Polish influence was a favorite idea of Alfred Rosenberg, but had been proposed by publicists in the nineteenth century. See for example Karl Emil Franzos, *Aus Halb-Asien: Culturbilder aus Galizien, der Bukowina, Südrussland und Rumanien*, part 1, 2d ed. (Leipzig, 1878), 16–17.

38. At war's end Poland had suffered the highest per capita death rate of any country in Europe. Close to six million Polish citizens (22 percent) did not survive the war. Half of the victims were Jews. Wacław Długoborski, "Die deutsche Besatzungspolitik gegenüber Polen," in *Nationalsozialistische Diktatur 1933–1945: Eine Bilanz*, ed. Karl Dietrich Bracher, Manfred Funke, Hans-Adolf Jacobsen (Düsseldorf, 1983), 573. For the view that the "largest number of civilian casualties of the war in Europe was sustained by the Ukrainians," see Norman Davies, "The Misunderstood Victory in Europe," *The New York Review of Books*, 42, no. 9 (1995): 8.

39. The number executed in Western Poland in September and October 1939 is estimated at 42,000. Włodzimierz Borodziej, *Terror i polityka: policja niemiecka i polski ruch oporu w GG 1939–1944* (Warsaw, 1985), 22.

40. This remark was made to a correspondent of the *Völkischer Beobachter* on 6 February 1940 and is reproduced in Pilichowski, *Es gibt keine Verjährung*. This fragment was not included in the published interview.

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even for teenagers, starvation rations, and permitted practically no autonomous Polish cultural life. As in the Czech lands, the occupiers closed universities, but they also closed secondary schools. To keep "order" they instituted a random, yet pervasive terror. On any given day of the occupation, a Pole might be apprehended in a mass street arrest (*łapanka*) as the Nazis without notice routinely cordoned off sections of streets and arrested anyone who happened to be there. Those arrested might be held hostage and shot, or sent to a camp or forced labor.[41] The situation was even worse for the Poles who lived in western areas attached directly to Germany: the age for taking forced labor was lower, the educational opportunities close to nil, and the system of terror more pervasive.[42] As in the occupied Soviet Union, Nazi brutality called forth vigorous partisan activity, culminating in the Warsaw Uprising of 1944 which left over 250,000 civilian dead.

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Several factors which have little to do with racial policy account for much of these differing approaches toward Slavic peoples. Southeastern Europe had not figured in Hitler's schemes for attaining living space (*Lebensraum*), and until 1943 much of it belonged to the Italian sphere of influence. In Slovakia, the Germans had set up a "showcase" which was intended to reveal to the countries of Southeastern Europe the supposed advantages of collaboration.[43] The need for war materials dictated a more balanced policy toward the Czech lands with their advanced armaments industries. Russia, by contrast, was central to the Nazi strategy of attaining living space, a need articulated in Hitler's earliest writings. There cities and industry were to be destroyed, to make way for German rural settlements. The simple imperial design—rooted in Hitler's racist understanding of human events—necessitated conflict with Russia.

Yet the question of racial ideology remains, for Poles and Russians were discriminated against in ways not dictated by the logic of wartime strategy, or the ultimate goals of living space. Why did the Nazis place these two groups near the bottom of the hierarchy of foreign workers within Germany?[44] Why did they hardly bother to seek collaborators in

41. Łapanka is usually translated as "manhunt." For recollections of a narrowly missed manhunt in Warsaw, see Czesław Miłosz, *The Captive Mind* (New York, 1981), 90. Jan T. Gross has argued that the randomness of such terror encouraged opposition, because Poles had no basis upon which to calculate survival. *Polish Society*, 238.

42. Rich, *Hitler's War Aims*, 2: 68–105; Broszat, *Nationalsozialistische Polenpolitik*; Czesław Madajczyk, *Die Okkupationspolitik Nazideutschlands in Polen 1939–1945* (Cologne, 1988).

43. Rich, *Hitler's War Aims*, 2:60; Hoensch, "The Slovak Republic," 284.

44. Matthias Hamann, "Erwünscht und unerwünscht: Die rassenpolitische Selektion der

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Poland, and exclude Poles from all but the lowest ranks of administration?[45] Attempts were not made to field a Polish SS division, though there was a White Russian division.[46] Why were Polish industrial laborers in Silesia treated worse than their Czech counterparts in Pilsen? Both areas were arguably of similar value to the war effort. Why were only Poles, Ukrainians, and Russians punished by death for sleeping with Germans?[47] There was also a distinct racial discrimination against the Poles built into the Nazis' postwar plan for Eastern Europe, the Generalplan Ost, which stipulated deportations to Siberia from areas of Eastern Europe to make way for German settlers: 80–85 percent of the Poles, 75 percent of the White Russians, and 64 percent of "western" Ukrainians.[48] Those not deported would either be "eliminated" or germanized.[49]

One is tempted to conclude that a racial hierarchy existed among the Slavs in the Nazi mind: at the bottom the Russians, Poles, and Ukrainians, above them the Serbs, further up the Czechs, and at the top the Croats, Bulgarians, and Slovaks. Yet when one looks at the writings of major Nazi officials from the prewar period one finds no hints of such a hierarchy; "Slavs" were thought of as a vague and undifferentiated generality. Thus Adolf Hitler referred in *Mein Kampf* to the "Austrian Slavs"—presumably including Czechs, Poles, Croats, and Slovenes—and lectured Hermann Rauschning on the "danger of too great an infusion of Slav

Ausländer," *Beiträge zur nationalsozialistischen Gesundheits- und Sozialpolitik*, vol. 3; Jochen August et al., *Herrenmensch und Arbeitsvölker* (Berlin, 1986), 163.

45. From an early point Ukrainians and Russians were used in the administration; even in White Russia Poles were excluded from administration, however, though in many regions they comprised the elites. Chiari, "Deutsche Zivilverwaltung," 75.

46. Overtures were, however, made to the mountain people of southern Poland, the "Gorales," but efforts to recruit an SS legion among these ostensible Germans failed. Janusz Berghauzen, "'Grupy nacisku'w niemieckiej polityce zagranicznej i w systemie okupacyjnym," *Dzieje najnowsze* 3, nos. 1/2 (1971); 224–25.

47. According to "Instructions for dealing with foreign workers in the Reich" from 1943. Raimond Reiter, *Tötungsstätten für ausländische Kinder im Zweiten Weltkrieg: Zum Spannungsverhältnis von kriegswirtschaftlichem Arbeitseinsatz und nationalsozialistischer Rassenpolitik in Niedersachsen* (Hanover, 1993), 237–38. In the Czech lands, on the other hand, German soldiers and officials were permitted to marry Czech women. Mastny, *The Czechs*, 134–35. Indeed, in 1938 Joseph Goebbels almost toppled over an affair with the Czech actress, Lida Baarová. For a general description of the hierarchy established for foreign workers, see Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany*, 127.

48. Czesław Madajczyk, "Vom 'Generalplan Ost' zum 'Generalsiedlungsplan,'" in *Der "Generalplan Ost,"* ed. Rössler and Schleiermacher, 13.

49. The process was supposed to take several decades; in their new "homes" the Slavs were to be given only the most rudimentary possibilities of survival, and not permitted independent culture or statehood. Madajczyk, "Vom 'Generalplan Ost,'" 13. The estimates of people to be removed from Poland, the Baltic states, and the Soviet provinces of Zhitomir, Kamenets-Podolsk, and Vinnitsa varied between 31 million (SS) and 46 to 51 million (Eastern Ministry). In both estimates some 14 million persons were to stay behind for germanization. Ackermann, *Himmler*, 223.

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blood into the German people," promising measures to limit "the further increase of the Slav races."[50] As mentioned above, Hitler reserved his contempt for the Czechs.

Similarly, when one looks for the prewar sources of Nazi anti-Polonism, one finds little of substance. Despite the apparently well-planned and thorough policies of wartime destruction, there was no set National Socialist policy toward Poland before 1939. Poland appears marginally in Hitler's writings and speeches. Hitler clearly thought of Poles as "racially foreign elements,"[51] yet according to Martin Broszat, the Polish victory over the Soviet Union in 1920 had made it difficult for him to conceive of Polish racial inferiority.[52] For him Poland was above all a "border state" to be courted for alliance against "enemy No. 1": the Soviet Union.[53] In January 1934 Germany and Poland concluded a nonaggression pact, and the Nazis reversed the pointedly anti-Polish policies of Weimar. The German-Polish trade war came to an end, and Warsaw and Berlin took pains to consult one another in matters of mutual concern. Berlin for example gave its blessing to Polish pressures on Lithuania and Czechoslovakia in 1938. Nazi leaders respected Polish counterparts: Hermann Goering, who visited Poland repeatedly on hunting excursions, even wrote the introduction to the German edition of Piłsudski's collected works.[54]

Because they figured so centrally in his plans for the future, Hitler had a more distinctly racist conception of the Russians, or as he called them, "Slavs of the Russian nationality."[55] In his view, cooperation with Russia

50. *Mein Kampf*, transl. Ralph Manheim (Boston, 1943), 388; Hermann Rauschning, *The Voice of Destruction* (New York, 1940), 136, 138.

51. *Hitlers zweites Buch: Ein Dokument aus dem Jahr 1928* Introduction and commentary by Gerhard L. Weinberg (Stuttgart, 1961), 81; *Mein Kampf*, 390.

52. Broszat writes that "Hitler's admiration for Piłsudski, vanquisher of the Red Army (1920), led him to a rather sympathetic assessment of the political and military ability of the Polish nation, which obscured (überdeckte) broad notions of Slavic racial inferiority for many years." *Nationalsozialistische Polenpolitik*, 10–11.

53. Broszat, *Zweihundert Jahre*, 182–83.

54. As late as the first months of 1939 a pro-Polish book could be printed in Germany, with an enthusiastic contribution by Hjalmar Schacht. See *Polen von Polen gesehen, mit einem Beitrag von Reichsminister Dr. H. Schacht* (Berlin, 1939). During the war the Nazis kept a guard of honor at Piłsudski's grave in Kraków. Christoph Klessmann, *Die Selbstbehauptung einer Nation: Nationalsozialistische Kulturpolitik und polnische Widerstandsbewegung im Generalgouvernement 1939–1945* (Düsseldorf, 1971), 27. On Hitler's respect for Piłsudski, see also Borejsza, *Antyslawizm*, 67–68; Harry Kenneth Rosenthal, *German and Pole: National Conflict and Modern Myth* (Gainesville, 1976), 103–4, 108.

55. *Hitlers zweites Buch*, 158–59. Here, too, one senses ambivalence, however. In *Mein Kampf* (p. 326) Hitler refered to the Russians as a "great people" which had suffered the domination of a "gang of Jews, journalists and stock exchange bandits." For the development of Nazi views toward Russians, see Manfred Weissbecker, "'Wenn hier Deutsche wohnten . . .' Beharrung und Veränderung im Russlandbild Hitlers und der NSDAP," in *Das Russlandbild im Dritten Reich*, ed. Hans-Erich Volkmann (Cologne, 1994), 9–54; Edmund Dmitrów, *Obraz Rosji i Rosjan w propagandzie narodowych socjalistów 1933–1945: Stare i nowe stereotypy* (Warsaw, 1997).

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had been possible for Bismarck's Germany because at that time Russia was no "typically Slavic state," but rather a state ruled by an upper class and intelligentsia which were of Germanic origin. Without this Russianized Germanic leadership, no "Great Russia" would have emerged in the first place, for Slavs were supposedly not capable of forming their own state.[56] In the late nineteenth century the Germanic stratum had supposedly diminished under attacks of Pan-Slavists, and during the First World War it was almost entirely eliminated. For Hitler, the October Revolution represented the ascendance to power of a new race in Russia: the Jews.[57]

Before 1939, a vague notion thus seems to have existed in leading Nazis' minds that Slavs constituted an inferior group, but just how inferior was an issue to be decided later. In the meantime it was possible to think of them not only as potential allies, but also as Europeans. A brochure was issued for the 1938 Nuremberg rally proclaiming Slavs part of the "Indogermanic peoples."

> Central and Northern Europe are the homeland of the Nordic race. At the beginning of the most recent Ice Age, around 5,000 BC, a Nordic-Indogermanic *Urvolk* of the Nordic race [*artgleicher nordrassischer Menschen*] existed, with the same language and unified mode of behavior [*Gesittung*], which divided into smaller and larger groups as it expanded. From these went forth Germans, Celts, Romans, Greeks, Slavs, Persians, and Aryan Indians . . .
>
> The original racial unity and common ownership of the most important cultural artifacts remained for thousands of years the cement holding together the Western peoples.[58]

Russia was presented as a "Land between Europe and Asia" where the "World War and Bolshevism have, for the time being, fully eradicated the European elements."[59] Yet these words were not written in stone; a certain range of views on Slavs existed among those writing on the subject within Nazi Germany. Early the following year a prehistory of Eastern Europe admitted that the "racial history of the Slavs" was still an "open question." Major racial theoreticians Hans F. K. Günther, Otto

56. "Dem Slawentum selbst fehlen im allgemeinen staatenbildende Kräfte." *Hitlers zweites Buch*, 156. See also Rosenberg, *Der Zukunftsweg*, 87–90. The idea that Czechs did not possess "abilities to form a state" was current in the press of Vienna in the early years of this century. See the thesis of Elenora Kandl, *Hitlers Österreichbild* (Vienna, 1963), 77 at Institut für Zeitgeschichte of Vienna University, cited in Borejsza, *Antyslawizm*, 131, n. 19.

57. *Hitlers zweites Buch*, 158–59; Weinberg, *Foreign Policy*, 12–13.

58. *NSDAP Amt für Schrifttumspflege: Ausstellung "Europas Schicksalskampf im Osten," unter Schirmherrschaft des Stellvertreters des Führers Reichsminister Rudolf Hess* (n.d., n.p.), 15–16. According to several experts on racial law in the Third Reich, Russians were a European people. Gerhart Hass, "Zum Russlandbild der SS," in Volkmann, *Das Russlandbild*, 202–3.

59. *NSDAP Amt für Schrifttumspflege: Ausstellung "Europas Schicksalkampf im Osten," unter Schirmherrschaft des Stellvertreters des Führers Reichsminister Rudolf Hess* (n.d., n.p.), 109.

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Reche, and Egon von Eickstedt had determined that the oldest Slavic remains were "mostly Nordic," yet it seemed that later Slavic populations were by no means racially uniform; according to the work of von Eickstedt and Polish anthropologist J. Czekanowski they exhibited "eastern Baltic and dark forms."[60] These unsettled questions on Slavs' racial attributes invited opportunistic wartime practice.

Contradictions in Practice

Hitler's views on Poland changed radically in the course of 1939. After the Munich crisis of the previous year, the Germans had made three demands of Poland: the surrender of Danzig, the construction of an extraterritorial rail- and highway through the Polish Corridor, and Polish collaboration in the Anti-Comintern Pact. In return, they offered to guarantee Poland's borders, and dangled a share of the spoils of war with the Soviet Union. Poland decisively refused these proposals, and to Hitler's outrage, received promises of support from Great Britain in late March 1939, should its sovereignty be "clearly threatened." The following month, Hitler renounced the pact of 1934, and began planning Poland's destruction; if he could not immediately have the space he desired in Russia, he would seize what he could in Poland.[61]

Soon after launching war against Poland in September 1939, the Nazi leadership and the supporting scientific community convinced themselves of Polish racial inferiority. With the ruins of Warsaw still smoldering, leading Eastern expert and historian Albert Brackmann of the University of Berlin hurried a booklet into print relegating the Poles and other Slavs to non-European status:

> The German people were the only bearers of culture in the East and in their role as the main power of Europe protected Western culture and carried it into uncultivated regions. For centuries they constituted a barrier in the East against lack of culture (*Unkultur*) and protected the West against barbarity. They protected the borders from Slavs, Avars, and Magyars.[62]

60. Karl-Heinz Schroetter, "Die Vorgeschichte des Ostens im Lichte neuer Erkenntnisse," in *Europas Schicksal im Osten*, ed. Hans Hagemeyer (Breslau, 1939), 90; see also Ilse Schwidetzky, *Rassenkunde der Altslawen* (Stuttgart, 1938), which summarizes the views of German as well as Polish and Czech anthropologists.

61. Borejsza, *Antyslawizm*, 78–81; Klaus Hildebrand, *The Foreign Policy of the Third Reich* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1970), 82–83.

62. Albert Brackmann, *Krisis und Aufbau in Osteuropa: Ein weltgeschichtliches Bild* (Berlin, 1939), 11. The view that Germans had brought culture to Poland and Eastern Europe was well-established among German historians. See Wolfgang Wippermann, *Der "Deutsche Drang nach Osten": Ideologie und Wirklichkeit eines politischen Schlagwortes* (Darmstadt, 1981), 106–8.

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Later that fall Joseph Goebbels noted after a visit that Poland was already "Asia."[63] Hitler and Rosenberg too learned from new experiences. The latter noted in his diary in late September:

> The Poles: a thin Germanic layer, underneath frightful material. The Jews, the most appalling people one can imagine. The towns thick with dirt. He's [Hitler] learnt a lot in these past few weeks. Above all, if Poland had gone on ruling the old German parts for a few more decades everything would have become lice-ridden and decayed.[64]

Two years later, while German troops were advancing deep into the Soviet Union, Hitler would proclaim that the border between Europe and Asia ran between the Germanic and Slavic peoples. The issue was to "place it where we wish."[65] He and Goebbels routinely referred to Russians as "beasts" and "animals."[66]

As the learning process continued, Nazi leaders began to recognize that certain Slavs could be useful. Hitler, though harboring the strongest suspicions of germanizing foreign populations, ruled in September 1940 that the assimilation of the greater part of the Czech people is possible for historical and racial reasons."[67] In March of the following year he praised to Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels the "hard work and inventiveness of the Czechs" and in 1942 he told his dinner companions that the Czechs were "industrious and intelligent workers."[68] Nazi racial experts estimated that up to half of the Czechs were of Nordic origin, and Hitler agreed.[69] He also came to view the Croats as fully assimilable, though he never wavered in antipathy toward Serbs.[70]

Even the Ukrainians were gradually seen in a more favorable light. Though he continued to oppose plans for Ukrainian statehood, visual impressions gained in the Ukraine softened Hitler's views on Ukrainians'

63. November, 1939, Goebbels, *Tagebücher*, 628.

64. Cited in G. Pridham and J. Noakes, eds., *Nazism 1919–1945*, vol. 3, *Foreign Policy, War and Racial Extermination: A Documentary Reader* (Exeter, 1988), 929. For further examples of the deep impressions made upon Hitler by direct experience of Poland in the autumn of 1939, see Borejsza, *Antyslawizm*, 85.

65. Adolf Hitler, *Monologe im Führerhauptquartier 1941–1944: Die Aufzeichnungen Heinrich Heims*, ed. Werner Jochmann (Hamburg, 1980), 66 (23 September 1941).

66. Ackermann, *Himmler*, 211, n. 101.

67. Mastny, *The Czechs*, 128. Hitler wrote in *Mein Kampf* (p. 388) that "germanization can only be applied to *soil* and never to *people*" (emphasis in original). Hitler consistently sided with those officials who themselves had great reservations about germanizing Slavic peoples, for example with Koch and Bormann against Rosenberg or Forster. See the discussion of 12 May 1942 in Picker, *Tischgespräche*, 283–90.

68. Fred Taylor, ed., *The Goebbels Diaries 1939–1941* (London, 1982), 272 (18 March 1941); See also the comments of 4 July 1942, Picker, *Tischgespräche*, 412.

69. Mastny, *The Czechs*, 128–35; 30 January 1942, Jochmann, ed., *Monologe*, 244.

70. Borejsza, *Antyslawizm*, 44–45.

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racial character.[71] In September 1941 Hitler approved the use of women from the East as domestic servants in Germany, and he instructed aids to revise "school knowledge about the great migration of peoples," for the many blond, blue-eyed Ukrainians might be "peasant descendants of German tribes who never migrated."[72] In a June 1942 visit to Poltava, Hitler

> had seen so many blue-eyed and blond women that, when he thought of the photographs of Norwegian and Dutch women submitted with marriage applications [by German soldiers—JC], he prefers to speak of the need to introduce southern elements [*Aufsüden*] into our European northern states, rather than northern elements into the south [*Aufnorden*].[73]

In August 1942 Hitler came out in support of assimilating Ukrainian women, who would help foster a "healthy balance" among the Germans. A "ludicrous hundred million Slavs" would either be absorbed or displaced.[74]

Though perhaps the most determined racist in the upper leadership of the Nazi movement, Heinrich Himmler likewise wavered under the pressures of war. Ukrainians were seen fit to join the SS, and were also used as police and camp guards. Those who doubted the racial logic of such moves were accused of lacking an understanding for the "revolutionary idea of National Socialism, which transcended the boundaries of national states." According to a training brochure for ideological schooling of the SS and police (ca. 1943), the force of the war had caused the "common roots of the European family of peoples to come to the surface." Indeed, the "blood ties [*blutmässige Verwandtschaft*] of Europe were based . . . upon the ancient [*einstmalig*] Germanic settlements between the Baltic and Black Seas, extending to the Atlantic Ocean and North Africa." When entire regiments of Cossacks went over to the German side, the SS determined that they were remnants of the Germanic "Chatten" once described by Tacitus.[75] The undeniable fact that the Soviet Union remained organized and under the hand of a strong leader caused Himmler to revise ideas about the loss of the Germanic leadership stratum in the East: like Attila,

71. On the Nazis' persistent brutalization of Ukrainians who had lived in the Soviet Union, see Dallin, *German Rule*, 123–67, 442–71; and on the Nazi leadership's stubborn resistance to ameliorating Ukrainians' living and working standards in the Reich even after 1943, Ulrich Herbert, *Fremdarbeiter Politik und Praxis des "Ausländer-Einsatzes" in der Kriegswirtschaft des Dritten Reiches* (Bonn, 1985), 263–69.

72. Herbert, *Hitler's Foreign Workers*, 188.

73. Picker, *Tischgespräche*, 345–46.

74. Again, Hitler was impressed by the preponderence of blond and blue-eyed people, which were evidence of "enormous Germanic racial fragments" (*riesige germanische Volkssplitter*), Jochmann, ed., *Monologe*, 331 (6 August 1942).

75. An SS training brochure wrote that "it was probably the Germanic blood which had caused the freedom-loving soldier-peasants [*Wehrbauern*] to take this step." Ackermann, *Himmler*, 185.

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Genghis Khan, and Tamerlane, Stalin was a "lost Nordic-Germanic-Aryan blood type."[76]

The crudeness of Nazi racial science made such opportunism all but inevitable. The only "scientific" tools the Nazis possessed to discover "valuable blood" among the Slavs were eye color, hair color, physical dimensions (e.g., skull), and various measures of intelligence.[77] Casual observation caused the leading Nazi officials of the occupied Czech lands and of Poland to enthuse about the potentials of the people under their rule. Konstantin von Neurath, the Reich Protector in Bohemia and Moravia, when judging the racial qualities of the population there, wrote that the "high number of fair-haired people with intelligent faces and well-shaped bodies, would not stand out unfavorably even in central and southern Germany."[78] In an attempt to recover "German blood" among the Gorales and other mountain peoples in Southern Poland, Himmler gave directions to note how many "blond and blue-eyed students there were in relation to the total number of students."[79] Hans Frank told his police chiefs in May 1940: "Frequently, we are surprised to find a blond and blue-eyed child speaking Polish and I say to myself: If we were to educate this child as a German then it would be a pretty German girl."[80] Only in the Czech lands did Nazis actually get around to "measuring" Germanic blood, and discovered to their surprise that the Czechs were actually of higher racial value, i.e., more Germanic, than the Sudeten Germans."[81]

Nothing seems to have shaken Hitler's or Himmler's views of the weakness of Germanic blood among Poles and Russians, however, and gradually the former subscribed to the view that was universal among anthropologists: namely that in the racial sense, there was no such thing as "Slavs":

> Hitler said that nothing in general could be said about the germanizability of the Slavs, because the word "Slavs" had been propagated by Tsarist

76. Rich, *Hitler's War Aims*, 349; Ackermann, *Himmler*, 206.

77. See suggestions of October 1940 by Himmler for a questionaire for Czech schoolchildren in Ackermann, *Himmler*, 208, n. 85. There were two categories for hair: blond and dark blond; or brown, dark brown, and black. Attempts to recognize race through blood had been abandoned after some initial enthusiasm in the mid-1930's. Friedländer, *Nazi Germany*, 119–20.

78. From his "Aufzeichnung über die Frage der zukünftigen Gestaltung des böhmisch-mährischen Raumes," 31 August 1940, in Mastny, *The Czechs*, 127. The entire ludicrous operation of attempting to identify valuable "blood" in the Protectorate is described with suitable irony in ibid., 123–39.

79. From a discussion between Himmler and Hans Frank from 13/14 March 1942 on the deportation of Poles in Madajczyk, ed., *Vom Generalplan Ost*, 44.

80. Pridhim and Noakes, *Nazism*, 963.

81. See Mastny, *The Czechs*, 132. Though no official measurements were carried out there, leading Nazi racial experts also suspected that the racial value of the Poles in the Łódź area was greater than that of the Germans there. See the "thoughts" of Dr. Erhard Wetzel on the Generalplan Ost of 27 April 1942 in Madajczyk, ed., *Vom Generalplan Ost*, 61.

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> Russia in the wake of its Pan-Slavic policy as a collective description for peoples that are completely different racially. For example it is complete nonsense to call the Bulgarians Slavs, because they are of Turkic origin. And you only need to let a Czech grow a mustache and you will see by the way it grows downward that he is a descendent of Mongoloid tribes. The so-called Southern Slavs are almost entirely Dinarian. For that reason the germanization of the Croats would be welcome from the racial [*volkstumsmässigen*] point of view, but from the political point of view it is out of the question.
> In any attempted germanization one may not act on the basis of abstract collective concepts, but has to ask in each individual case whether the person to be germanized belongs to a race which would improve our own people [*Volkstum*], or whether the person exhibits qualities of a race which, like the Jewish, would have a negative effect of mixing with German blood.[82]

Thus in Hitler's mind small doses of German blood could dominate other sorts of blood—except in the case of the Jews, where the opposite was the case. Hitler imagined that even tiny amounts of Jewish blood could assert themselves after many generations.[83]

From the belief that there were no "Slavs" in the racial sense, it was a short step to the recognition that there were no Russians, Ukrainians, or Poles in the racial sense, that is, to a belief that these groups were not *real*. Thus Martin Bormann spoke of "so-called Ukrainians"[84] and racial

82. This was supposed to be a "general statement about the germanizability [*Eindeutschungsfähigkeit*] of the Slavs," in response to Gauleiter Albert Forster's view that Poles might be germanized even if their German descent could not be definitively established. Forster favored a positive judgment on assimilation if the "complete impression" given by the Pole led one to believe that "in appearance, character, and intelligence he reveals Germanic characteristics." See the conversations from 12 May 1942 in Picker, *Tischgespräche*, 286–88. For the "scientific" consensus that the "Slavic peoples are of diverse racial composition" see Otto Reche, *Rasse und Heimat der Indogermanen* (Munich, 1936), 34. This point was emphasized in a report of the SD of 11 November 1940, which directed attention to the increasing tendency to speak of "Slavs" in speeches, newspaper articles, and school books: "This way of speaking is popular but extremely disturbing. The first thing to note is that it does not correspond to our racial way of thinking. The term 'Slav' comes from linguistics. The racial picture corresponds to linguistic affinities to a far lesser extent than is the case with Germanic peoples. Ukrainians and Poles, Bulgarians and Croats, Russians and Czechs are so different in a racial sense, that they cannot be understood as a common racial unit . . . It is a basic mistake to conceal the natural enmity of certain Eastern (Poles—Ukrainians) and Southeastern peoples (Czechs—Slovaks)." Emphasis in original. Heinz Boberach, ed., *Meldungen aus dem Reich: Die geheimen Lageberichte des Sicherheitsdienstes der SS 1938–1945*, vol. 5 (Herrsching, 1984), 1756–57. For the continued use of the term "Slavs" to denote race by leading Nazis, see below n. 118.

83. "The Jewish people are tougher" (Das jüdische Volkstum ist eben zäher) Picker, *Tischgespräche*, 398–99 (1 July 1942); also 24 July 1942: "Geschäftlich suche das Judentum Europa, Europa müsse es aber schon aus Sakroegoismus ablehnen, da das Judentum rassisch härter sei." 456.

84. Picker, *Tischgespräche*, 453 (22 July 1942).

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expert Reche tried to sow doubts as to the existence of "Russians."[85] Officials in the Generalgouvernement, in collaboration with other "experts" on race, began to break down the Poles as a group.[86] The director of the department of internal administration in the Generalgouvernement, Dr. W. Föhl, expained that he and his colleagues had gone through a learning process:

> During the World War we used to think that the Polish people belonged to the great "*Slavic family of peoples*" . . .
> The postwar period has opened our eyes to the profound differences among the Slavic family of peoples, and thanks to the rapid progress of the field of racial science we have learned to identify the structural differences within the individual peoples. During the present ethnic cleansing [*in vollem Gange befindlichen völkischen "Flurbereinigung"*] of East Central Europe, we have started to use ever more precise methods of ethnography and racial science [*Volks- und Rassenkunde*] to take apart the notion of the *Pole* . . .[87]

Partly using—and citing—the work of Polish scholars Oskar Kolberg, Eugenia and Kazimierz Stolyhwo, Jan Czekanowski, Jan Mydlarski, and Stanisław Środowski, the Germans had divided central Poland into five racial zones, with varying concentrations of "Nordic, Subnordic, Dinarian, Praeslavic, and Eastern" types.[88] Correlations were made between racial mixture and inborn characteristics of the peoples of these regions. The Masovian (the singular was invariably used in these depictions) was "carefree and so daring as to be foolhardy; lively; even gay and adventurous,

85. See Michael Burleigh, *Germany Turns Eastwards: A Study of Ostforschung in the Third Reich* (Cambridge, New York: 1988), 225.

86. For further references see Tomasz Szarota, "Stereotyp Polski i Polaków w oczach Niemców podczas II Wojny Światowej," *Sobótka* 33, no. 2 (1978): 197–98.

87. W. Föhl, "Die Bevölkerung des Generalgouvernements," in *Das Generalgouvernement* ed. Max Freiherr du Prel (Würzburg, 1942), 27.

88. Polish works cited include Kazimierz Stolyhwo, *Analiza typów antropologicznych* (Warsaw, 1924) and *Ludność Województwa Lubelskiego* (Lublin, 1932); Stanisław Środowski, *Geografia gospodarcza Polski* (Warsaw, 1939); and Oskar Kolberg, *Lud, jego zwyczaje, sposób życia, mowa, podania* (Kraków, 1864–91). See also the use of Czekanowski's work (in particular his depiction of certain Eastern Poles as "Lappanoide") in the "thoughts" of Dr. Erhard Wetzel on the Generalplan Ost of 27 April 1942 in Madajczek, ed., *Vom Generalplan Ost*, 6. Though Czekanowski's early work had been produced in Piłsudski's Poland, it proved of use both to the Nazis, in their program to declare Poles racially inferior, and to the postwar Polish Communist regime, in its efforts to legitimate Polish presence in recently German territories. Czekanowski's *Introduction to the History of the Slavs (Wstęp do historii Słowian: perspektywy antropologiczne, etnograficzne, prehistoryczne i językoznawcze)* appeared as volume one of the Lwów Slavonic library in 1927, and as volume twenty-one in the studies of the Western Institute in Poznań thirty years later. In an introduction to the latter work Czekanowski reported that the "original homeland" of the Slavs had been located in the "basin of the Oder and Neisse rivers . . . contrary to the traditional theses of German scholarship." 5–6.

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but also stubborn and dogged . . . loves drink, play, and dance"; the Krakovian was "belligerent and hot-blooded . . . but also hospitable, helpful, and generous . . . dexterous in his work, but not systematic or persistent. His favorite motto [*Merkspruch*] is three days work then three days loafing." On the basis of the work of Polish scholars Studencki and Rosiński the Germans had determined that the population of central Poland (mostly Praeslavic) was "impulsive, of low intelligence, and emotionally unstable . . ." Further Polish groups identified were the "Kurpier, Podlachier, Lubliner, Lasowiaker, Lachen, and Sieradzaner."[89]

More positive judgments were made of the mountain people of southern Poland—the Gorales—and of the Western Ukrainians. The latter were found to be akin to the South Slavs, "especially the Bulgarians, Croats, and Slovenes."[90] Again, the work of Studencki and Rosiński was used to determine dominant characteristics, but since Polish ethnographers had not devoted much time to the study of Ukrainians, it was not until 1942/43 that Föhl could fully categorize the West Ukrainians, who supposedly consisted of "Dolynianer, Buzaner, Pidhirianer, Batken, Batiuken, Opolaner, and Podolianer." Despite the lack of "dependable studies" of Ukrainian racial characteristics, Föhl cited the works of a Ukrainian (Rudnyckyj), Pole (Sawicki), and Austrian German (Sacher-Masoch) on the "Ukrainian national character." The last, as chief of police in Lwów, had in 1863 described "the Ruthenian [as] the born democrat in the noblest sense of the word."[91]

This racial "science" corresponded to and reinforced the logic of politics. In May 1940 SS chief Heinrich Himmler wrote his "Thoughts on the Treatment of the Alien Population in the East":

> In our treatment of the foreign ethnic groups in the east we must endeavor to recognize and foster as many such individual groups as possible, i.e., apart from the Poles and the Jews, the Ukrainians, White Russians, Gorales, Lemkes, and Kaschubians. If there are any more ethnic splinter groups to be found, then these too.
> I mean to say that we not only have a major interest in not uniting the population in the east, but, on the contrary, we need to divide them up into as many parts and splinter groups as possible.[92]

89. Föhl, "Die Bevölkerung," 31–50.

90. Ibid., 45.

91. Other ethnographers upon whose work the Germans drew were Kolberg's students Udziela, Antoniewicz, and Bystroń. See Walter Föhl, "Die Bevölkerung des Generalgouvernements," in *Das Generalgouvernement: Seine Verwaltung und seine Wirtschaft*, ed. Josef Bühler (Kraków, 1943), 50–57. The Nazis also made use of Bystroń's work on the polonization of names; see Kurt Lück, *Der Lebenskampf im deutsch-polnischen Grenzraum* (Berlin, 1941), 79.

92. Cited in Pridham and Noakes, *Nazism*, 932. These "thoughts" were subsequently approved by Hitler. In February 1940 Himmler had given a secret speech to Gauleiter and

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Racism and the Peoples of the East

Policies adopted by Nazi Germany toward Slavic peoples cannot be fully explained by Nazi racial ideology. This is evident both in the contradictory and opportunistic nature of policies pursued during the war, and in the absence of any coordinated thinking on this issue in the prewar period. Hitler in particular had at best a vague notion of what "Slavs" were, and precise connections between his supposed "anti-Slavism" before 1939, and the policies adopted toward Slavic peoples after 1939, defy attempts at documentation.[93]

How then can one explain the actual practice of racism toward Poles, Russians, White Russians, Ukrainians, and Czechs? Historians who have studied Nazi wartime policies have almost entirely neglected the question of the prewar origins.[94] With the exception of the peoples of the Soviet Union, no clear connection has been drawn between the policies adopted after 1939, and statements of intention before that period. Since the Soviet Union played a central role in Hitler's plans to achieve *Lebensraum*, he had not been able to avoid thoughts about these territories: they would be emptied of a population largely contaminated by "Judeo-Bolshevism." But Hitler did not say precisely how this would take place, and seems to have envisioned some combination of killing, transfer, and sterilization.[95]

One response to the difficulty of tracing ideological origins of wartime policy has been to portray such policy as a function of "modernity."[96] One influential school has emerged which traces the origins of the Generalplan Ost—and indeed the Holocaust of the Jews—to the concerns of economists in the 1930s about Eastern Europe's "surplus population" (*Übervölkerung*): "they wanted to solve the supposed surplus population problem that they had analyzed and modernize the structure of Europe in the German interest"[97] This scheme leaves central questions unanswered.

Reichsleiter in which he explained the advancement from tribes to nations of Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, and Hungarians through the partial presence of Nordic blood. Richard Breitman, *The Architect of Genocide: Himmler and the Final Solution*, (New York, 1991), 99–100.

93. Jerzy W. Borejsza writes that it is impossible to discover any "great precision in Hitler's use of the words Slawen, Ostvölker, Oststaaten, Ostraum, Ostpolitik, Osteinsatz." *Antyslawizm*, 28.

94. For example, the most extensive treatment of Nazi wartime policies in Poland devotes only a few pages to the prewar period. Czesław Madajczyk, *Polityka III Rzeszy w okupowanej Polsce: okupacja Polski, 1939–1943*, 2 vols. (Warsaw, 1970).

95. See Rauschning, *Voice of Destruction*, 136–38.

96. See esp. Bauman, *Modernity*.

97. Götz, Aly and Susanne Heim et al., eds., *Sozialpolitik und Judenvernichtung: Gibt es eine Ökonomie der Endlösung? Beiträge zur nationalsozialistischen Gesundheits-und Sozialpolitik* 5 (Berlin, 1987), 8; see also Aly and Heim, *Vordenker*, 69–111. For trenchant critiques of "modernity"-driven studies of National Socialism, see Norbert Frei, "Wie modern war der Nationalsozialismus," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 19 (1993): 367–87; Burleigh and Wippermann,

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Ethnic hatred was widespread in the Europe of the 1930s—as it is today—but why did it develop as it did in Germany? Causal links remain symptomatically weak in work that attempts to explain Nazi wartime policy via "modernity," and that is not surprising, since the Nazi concern during World War II was not that Eastern Europe was "overpopulated," but that it was populated by the wrong kind of people.[98] Furthermore, in Hitler's mind these regions were underpopulated.[99] That is part of the reason that he saw them as fit for colonization.

How then can one account for the development of policies of annihilation against some groups of Slavs and not others? This question awaits detailed case studies, but the discussion above highlights the importance of *Lebensraum*, itself a thoroughly racist concept, according to which the German people had to grow if it was to survive, and could grow only toward the "East." A precise definition of what was the "East," and therefore which "Slavs" had to be assimilated, destroyed, or displaced, could emerge only in the practice of war. All that seemed certain beforehand was that the race war would involve the peoples of the Soviet Union.[100]

But Nazi intentions toward the Poles and other Slavic groups in Eastern and Southeastern Europe were relatively open. If the Polish state had been willing to collaborate with Hitler in 1939, it might have survived as a satellite similar to Slovakia, that is, a land to the south of the corridor leading to *Lebensraum*.[101] It was by blocking that path that the Poles became the sort of "Slavs" destined for destruction. Thus it was not longstanding Nazi plans to destroy the Poles which engendered Polish resistance in 1939 and thereafter, but rather Polish resistance which brought forth

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The Racial State, 1–22; Burleigh, "A 'Political Economy of the Final Solution?' Reflections on Modernity, Historians and the Holocaust," in idem, *Ethnics and Extermination: Reflections on Nazi Genocide* (Cambridge, 1997), 169–82; Steinberg, "The Third Reich Reflected," 650, n. 1; and, with extensive references to the literature, Wolfgang Wippermann, "Wie modern war der 'Generalplan Ost'? Thesen und Antithesen." *Der "Generalplan Ost"* ed. Rössler and Schleiermacher, 125–30.

98. For decades social scientists have registered "overpopulation" in Eastern Europe without advocating depopulation. See for example Barbara Hicks, *Environmental Politics in Poland: A Social Movement between Regime and Opposition* (New York, 1996), 35; Joseph Rothschild, *East Central Europe between the World Wars* (Seattle, 1974), 15, 17, 20; George Schöpflin, *Politics in Eastern Europe* (Oxford and Cambridge, MA, 1993), 138; Michael Fedorowicz and Anthony Levitas, "Works Councils in Poland: 1944–1992," in *Market Economy and Social Justice: The Report of the Institute of Social Sciences, Chuo University* 13 (Tokyo, 1994), 228.

99. Weinberg, *Foreign Policy*, 13; Dmitrów, *Obraz*, 125, 134.

100. Dallin, *German Rule*, 7–9; on the location of *Lebensraum* see also *Hitlers zweites Buch*, 155; Weinberg, *Foreign Policy*, 12–14; Broszat, *Zweihundert Jahre*, 182–83; Borejsza, *Antyslawizm*, 30.

101. Klessmann, *Selbstbehauptung*, 27–28; Broszat, *Nationalsozialistische Polenpolitik*, 10. "Lebensraum" did not need to be a neat contiguous entity: the first places the Nazis intended to annex after the War were the Baltic states, Galicia, and the Crimea. Rich, *Hitler's War Aims*, 327.

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such plans. To make the point absolutely clear: this Polish defiance triggered Nazi violence, it did not produce it, for, as Jonathan Steinberg has written, a "will to destroy" lay at the center of the Nazi enterprise.[102]

In the Czech lands there was no initial spark of defiance; German troops moved unopposed into border areas in the fall of 1938, and completed their occupation without a shot in March of the following year. Neither Czechs nor Germans had an incentive to upset the relative calm; the Germans valued the steady production of war materials from Czech industry, and the Czechs the significant spaces that remained for pursuit of economic and cultural interests. So powerful was the dynamic of mutual accommodation that even the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich in 1942 could not upset it. After the Germans had obliterated two villages and executed hundreds of suspected and actual opposition members, both sides returned to a strained coexistence which lasted until shortly before Russian and American troops liberated the Czech lands in the spring of 1945.

As mentioned, Slovakia became a model of "cooperation" for the lands of Southeastern Europe, and German interference in the domestic affairs of the Slovak state was minimal. One can, however, well imagine a different fate for the Slovak lands if a united Czechoslovakia had opposed Hitler: either complete annexation to Hungary, or some sort of occupation regime similar to the Protectorate or Poland. If the Slovaks showed the benefits of cooperation, the Serbs demonstrated the price of defiance. The vengeance taken upon Belgrade and other Serb towns had nothing to do with "anti-Slavic" ideology, but, similar to Poland, with Hitler's rage that a small country would dare stand in his way.[103] Continued Serb resistance exacted withering punishment, so that the sort of cycle of murder and violence that Omer Bartov has spoken of in the Soviet case could emerge in German-occupied Yugoslavia as well. Slavic states willing to cooperate—like Bulgaria and Croatia—shared in the spoils.

These patterns of resistance and accomodation between Germans and Slavs were not entirely new. For their part, Czechs had learned to survive and even prosper under German-Austrian rule; and the German world was a place where the older generation, if not completely at home, was also not entirely foreign. Many Poles of the older generation by contrast knew traditions of conspiratorial resistance to attempted denationalization.

102. Steinberg *The Third Reich*, 648–49.

103. Vojtech Mastny has written that the "Nazis did not follow any master plan for the administration of their rapidly growing European domains. The circumstances of their seizure varied, leaving a permanent imprint upon the character of each occupation regime." Yugoslavia and Poland were both punished for resistance, unlike the Czechs who had "peacefully submitt[ed] to German overlordship." *The Czechs*, 99.

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This included armed uprisings, but also such things as "flying unversities," that is, networks of underground education. Such networks reemerged throughout Poland after 1940, with the same structures and idioms (*nauka w tajnych kompletach*) as in the pre-World War I period.[104] They were weakest in Galicia, the former Austrian part of Poland, whose Polish elites—like Czech counterparts—had developed strategies of accomodation. Though universities were closed in the Czech lands as well, no networks of conspiratorial education emerged there.

The Germans also drew upon tradition. Images of inferior and hostile Slavs—above all Russians and Poles—had been nurtured in certain quarters for centuries, and served as justification for aggressive designs upon the East.[105] Colloquial German speech was suffused with negative references to the Pole: *polenvoll, polnischer Reichstag, polnische Wirtschaft.*[106] Anti-Polish sentiments were exploited by aggressively chauvinistic organizations of the late nineteenth century, like the Pan-German League or the Eastern Marches Society,[107] but were by no means limited to the far Right. Max Weber had argued that only a "systematic colonization of German peasants on German soil" could hold back the "Slavic flood."[108] Both Poles and Czechs were feared for their propensity to demographically overwhelm German settlements: the former through fecundity, the latter through

104. See Walczak *Szkolnictwo*; Józef Buszko and Irena Pacyzńska, ed., *Universities during World War II* (Kraków, 1984); Karl Hartmann, *Hochschulwesen und Wissenschaft in Polen; Entwicklung, Organisation und Stand, 1918–1960* (Frankfurt am Main, 1962).

105. Wippermann, "Wie modern," 127. No monograph exists on the evolution of anti-Slavism within Germany. For valuable short studies see Wolfgang Wippermann, "Probleme und Aufgaben der Beziehungsgeschichte zwischen Deutschen, Polen und Juden," in *Deutsche-Polen-Juden: Ihre Beziehungen von den Anfängen bis ins 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. Stefi Jersch-Wenzel (Berlin, 1987), esp. 35–37; Massimo Ferrari Zumbini, "Grosse Migration und Antislawismus: negative Ostjudenbilder im Kaiserreich," in *Jahrbuch für Antisemitismusforschung* 3 (1994); esp. 207–12; Maria Lammich, *Das deutsche Osteuropabild in der Zeit der Reichsgründung* (Boppard am Rhein, 1978); Wolfgang Wippermann, "'Gen Ostland wollen wir reiten!' Ordensstaat und Ostsiedlung in der historischen Belletristik Deutschlands," in *Germania Slavica* 2, ed. Wolfgang H. Fritze (Berlin, 1981), 187–235. On nationality conflict within Prussian Poland see William W. Hagen, *Germans, Poles, and Jews: The Nationality Conflict in the Prussian East, 1772–1914* (Chicago, 1980) and Richard Blanke, *Prussian Poland and the German Empire (1871–1900)* (Boulder, 1981).

106. From the spring of 1939 German propaganda returned to traditional stereotypes of Poles from the nineteenth century. Borejsza, *Antyslawizm*, 102–3; Szarota, "Stereotyp Polski," 191; Rosenthal, *German and Pole*, 102–3. For a history of German images of Poland, see Hasso von Zitzewitz, *Das deutsche Polenbild in der Geschichte: Entstehung—Einflüsse—Auswirkungen* (Cologne, 1993).

107. Roger Chickering, *We Men Who Feel Most German: A Cultural Study of the Pan-German League 1886–1914* (Boston, 1984), 242–43; Adam Galos, Felix-Heinrich Genthen, Witold Jakóbczyk, *Der deutsche Ostmarkenverein (1894–1934)* (Berlin, 1966), 199–206.

108. Käthe Schirmacher, a representative of the radical wing of the bourgeois women's movement, claimed that the "racial" differences between Poles and Germans were too great to allow for common ancestry; the Poles were descended from a "primordial ant-eater" (*Urschuppentier*) Wippermann, "Wie modern," 128.

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trickery.[109] The racial hierarchy that emerged during the war in occupied territories reflected Nazi interests—for example for living space in western Poland—but also matched and reinforced age-old prejudices.[110]

For his part, Hitler served to combine and radicalize the diffuse anti-Slavic sentiments of Austrian and Prussian Germany.[111] On the one hand there could be no binding agreements with Russia, supposedly the originator of the Pan-Slavism that had destroyed the Habsburg Empire, and on the other hand German policy would focus on the colonization of the East. What was "shockingly new and original" in Hitler's eastern policy, writes Jerzy W. Borejsza, were the methods.[112] Hitler found plenty of willing accomplices for his ideas, in the form of underappreciated and underqualified administrators from the Reich, anxious to be recognized as a "master race," and in the form of a young and ambitious technocratic elite—which Karl Heinz Roth has called a "Nazi intelligentsia"—eager to make careers as agronomists, anthropologists, economists, architects, and development planners.[113] These people shared the ethnic stereotypes of the older generation, but gave them a new racist edge: no longer would the people of the East be "civilized," they would be either germanized or swept away.

The ultimate trajectory of this wartime anti-Slavic crusade, in the opinion of a number of historians in Central Europe, was the complete elimina-

109. Rosenthal, *German and Pole*, 101–2; Rudolf Jung, *Die Tschechen: Tausend Jahre deutsch-tschechischer Kampf* (Berlin, 1937).

110. According to Jerzy W. Borejsza, German anti-Slavism of Hitler's time did not result from the works of Gobineau or Houston Stewart Chamberlain; the latter had even written positively about the Slavs. Rather, "this racism was connected to a mass mentality formed over decades and centuries, and shaped in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries by popular newspapers . . . a feeling of superiority became one of the major components of the mentalities of millions of Germans even before 1933, and was later raised to the level of an official state doctrine. This doctrine then served as the ideological motivation for the extermination of millions of people." *Antyslawizm*, 18.

111. Hitler told his entourage at the Obersalzberg on 22 August 1939 that his "previous Polish policy was at odds with the opinions of the people." Max Domarus, *Hitler, Reden und Proklamationen 1932–1945*, vol. 2 (Munich, 1962/63), 1235 cited in Borejsza, *Antyslawizm*, 81. For anti-Polish sentiments in the Weimar Republic, Borejsza, *Antyslawizm*, 27–29; Dorothea Friedrich, *Das Bild Polens in der Literatur der Weimarer Republik* (Frankfurt am Main, 1984). On the Nazis' success in stirring up anti-Polish sentiments in Germany after September 1939, see Ian Kershaw, *The "Hitler Myth": Image and Reality in the Third Reich* (Oxford and New York, 1987), 143–44.

112. Borejsza, *Antyslawizm* 110–11, 123 (quote). Hitler's Polish policy "echoed but went beyond those which Pan-Germans such as General Ludendorff had attempted to realize during the First World War and which had been kept alive by academics and right wing pressure groups during the 1920s and 1930s." Pridham and Noakes, *Nazism*, 923.

113. Karl-Heinz Roth, "'Generalplan Ost'—'Gesamtplan Ost': Forschungsstand, Quellenprobleme, neue Ergebnisse," in *Der "Generalplan Ost"*, ed. Rössler and Schleiermacher, 25–82. On the noxious role of lower level German administrators and police in the East, see also Chiari, "Deutsche Zivilverwaltung," and, with regard to the Holocaust of the Jews, Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust*, (New York, 1996).

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tion of the Slavs. Concluding his study of Nazi anti-Slavism Jerzy W. Borejsza writes that

> in accordance with the theories of race of the Third Reich, the fate of the Jews also awaited the Poles . . . After the complete extermination of the Jews the Third Reich would have to organize total hatred against the next mythologized enemies: the Russians, and then the Poles. Was this degree of total hatred against the Russians not realized? The plans of Adolf Hitler were not precise, but they assumed destruction, and did not exclude complete extermination.[114]

The Holocaust of the Jews is therefore not seen as some special event, qualitatively different from policies toward other East European peoples, but rather as the first event in a sequence. Eugeniusz Duraczyński describes "the Nazi extermination of the Polish Jews [as] a monstrous component of a large plan to destroy the peoples living in the territories of Poland, Ukraine, and White Russia."[115]

Comparison makes other aspects of Nazi policies toward Jews seem less singular. Charles S. Maier has identified a unique sort of "moral threshold" that the Nazis crossed in dehumanizing the Jews, which meant that abandoning the Madagascar plan and moving to "poison gas hardly seemed a step different in kind."[116] Yet in the view of Polish historian Tomasz Szarota, this barrier was also crossed in the case of Poles: "the stereotype of the Jew—a parasitical insect, did not differ in the least from similar stereotypes of the Pole."[117] Likewise the method of killing did not differ: many thousands of Poles were also gassed at Auschwitz.

114. Borejsza, *Antyslawizm*, 105–6. Borejsza's assumption of a relation between the presence of Jews in the Third Reich and Nazi obsession with a Jewish threat is questionable. See above, n. 12–13.

115. Duraczyński, *Wojna*, 102. For similar views see C. Madajczyk, "Wojna i okupacja w Polsce jako instrument zniszczenia narodu," *Dzieje najnowsze*, 1 (1969); 15–25; Roth, "'Generalplan Ost'—'Gesamtplan Ost,'" 38–89; Dmitrów, *Obraz*, 130; Gross, *Polish Society*, 75; Richard C. Lukas, *The Forgotten Holocaust* (New York, 1997), 2–5. These views are also widespread among the Polish educated public (see for example the comments of Władysław Siła-Nowicki in Antony Polonsky, ed., *"My Brother's Keeper?" Recent Polish Debates on the Holocaust* (London and New York, 1990), 65–66, and seem to have their origins in wartime fears of Poles and other Slavic peoples that the Nazis intended their complete destruction. See for example the reports on western Poland from March and June of 1941 in Boberach, *Meldungen*, vols. 6–7; 2157–58, 2434–35. In 1942 according to a report from the Brest-Litovsk area, a rumor was "going round in the population that after the Jewish action first the Russians, then the Poles and then the Ukrainians will be shot." White Russians had begun to hide their children "convinced they were next on the list." Steinberg, "Third Reich," 639, 643. See also: Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, Student Edition (New York and London, 1985), 196, 215–16.

116. Charles S. Maier, *The Unmasterable Past: History, Holocaust, and German National Identity* (Cambridge, MA, 1988), 76, 82.

117. He continues: "The goal in each case was identical: to break down psychological barriers to the killing of people, and to convince Germans that they are dealing with

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Yet an important distinction does remain, and it derives from a distinction in ideology. Only in the case of the Jews did Nazi racial ideology overpower every other consideration, whether of the economy, of military strategy, or of racial science. In the case of the Slavs Nazi ideology gradually adapted to the contours of conventional racial theory, though it was never officially codified.[118] The sources of Nazi racial thinking on Slavs were not entirely German; among the unwitting contributors to the belief in Polish inferiority were Polish anthropologists. In the case of the Jews, however, the relationship was the opposite: racial theorists adapted to the Nazi understanding of Jews as a race.

Before the seizure of power in 1933, Hitler and other Nazis repeatedly referred to the Jews as a race, much in contrast to leading racial expert Prof. Hans F. K. Günther, who argued that the Jews could not be considered a "race" but rather a "racial mixture." For racial theorists, the characteristics of Jews differed according to the components present in any particular group—for example the Jews in Central Europe were thought to be superior to those of Eastern Europe. Thus for Günther there was no general "scientific" basis for speaking of Jewish "inferiority," though he strongly favored the segregation of Jews and Aryans.[119] After the Nazi seizure of power, leading race experts revised such views in favor of the monolithic Nazi anti-Semitism, however. In 1938 director of the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Institut for Anthropology, Prof. Eugen Fischer, spoke of the

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Untermenschen, i.e., insects. And one does not fight insects (because a fight is between partners) as much as one exterminates them as vermin, for reasons of hygiene." Szarota, "Stereotyp Polski," 200.

118. Though racial "experts" in the Eastern administrations and the SD opposed popular beliefs in a unified racial entity called "Slavs," one finds continued reference to Slavs by Nazi leaders to denote a group based in race, and located mostly in German-occupied Europe, especially Russia. See Himmler's secret speech of 24 October 1943 in Poznań, and its reference above all to "Russian space," because "Russia is the mother of all Slavs." Ackermann, *Himmler*, 290–96. See also the remarks of Reinhard Heydrich to leading officials in Prague on 2 October 1941. Referring in one moment to the people of the East (*Osträume*), Heydrich declared that 'the Slav . . . did not wish to be treated as an equal," and in the next to the Czechs as Slavs who interpret "kindness as weakness." Miroslav Kárný, et al., *Protektorátní polityka Reinharda Heydricha* (Prague, 1991), 102, 105. See also Martin Bormann's hateful remarks about "Slavs" from August 1942 in *Der Prozess gegen die Hauptkriegsverbrecher vor dem internationalen Militärgerichtshof*, vol. 19 (Nuremberg, 1948), 558. All of these officials subscribed to the notion of racial variations among the Slavs, however.

119. See Hans F. K. Günther, *Rassenkunde des jüdischen Volkes* (Munich, 1930), 11–13, 239–48, 323–24. For Hitler's view see *Mein Kampf*, 232, 300, 325; also Eberhard Jäckel and Alex Kuhn, eds., *Sämtliche Aufzeichnungen 1905–1924*, (Stuttgart, 1980), 89, cited in Borejsza, *Antyslawizm*, 52. See also Hitler's 30 January 1939 "prophecy' of the 'destruction of the Jewish race in Europe." Cited in Andreas Hillgruber, "Imperialismus und Rassendoktrin als Kernstück der NS-Ideologie," in *Strukturelemente des Nationalsozialismus*, ed. Leo Haupts and Georg Mölich (Cologne, 1981), 30–31. For other leading Nazi propagandists' belief in a Jewish "race": see Curt Rosten, *Der jüdischen Rasse Weg und Ziel* (Berlin, 1934); Alfred Rosenberg, *Der Bolschewismus als Aktion einer fremden Rasse* (Munich, 1935).

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Jews as an "oriental-near eastern amalgamated race."[120] And in an attempt to synthesize "anthropological science" with the newer ideological dictums, Fischer's sucessor, Prof. Otmar Freiherr von Verschuer of Frankfurt, imagined that "the Jews have 'bred' their own race."[121]

These differing logics of racial ideology had decisive implications for Nazi practice in Eastern Europe during the war. Because the Nazis did not understand the Poles or the Russians—let alone the Slavs—as a race, there could be no policy of complete eradication. Any proponent of complete destruction of Poles or Russians would have first stumbled upon the difficulty of defining who a Pole or Russian was in the racial sense; there was no equivalent of the Nuremberg laws for this purpose.[122] In practice, every level of the Nazi hierarchy, whether the top leadership and its most inveterate Slavophobes, racial "scientists," or the army and SS, constantly made distinctions within various Slavic groups. There was not a region in Poland where some "Nordic" elements were not imagined; in the western and northern areas it was thought to be more than half.[123] Entire groups of speakers of Slavic languages within Poland, like the Gorales, or the Lemkos, were thought of as essentially Germanic.

120. Eugen Fischer, "Rassenentstehung und älteste Rassengeschichte der Hebräer," *Forschungen zur Judenfrage*, vol. 3 (1938), 136.

121. He concluded with a defense of the "complete racial separation of Jews and Germans," contending that the "maintenance of the character of our people was directly threatened by racial infiltration [*Überfremdung*]." Otmar Freiherr von Verschuer, "Rassenbiologie der Juden," *Forschungen zur Judenfrage*, vol. 3 (1938), 149. Verschuer succeeded Fischer at the Kaiser-Wilhelm Institute in 1942, and taught in Frankfurt until 1951, when he moved to Münster, where he was professor until his death in 1969. *Kürschners deutscher Gelehrten-Kalendar 1950* (Berlin, 1950), 2153; *Kürschners deutscher Gelehrten-Kalendar 1970* (Berlin, 1971), 3115, 3438. See also the references to a Jewish race in Munich Professor Richard Fester's "Das Judentum als Zersetzungselement der Völker: Weltgeschichtliche Betrachtungen," *Forschungen zur Judenfrage*, vol. 6 (1941), 29, 38. Much of the popular literature on race continued communicating Günther's view of Jews as a "racial mixture," mainly of the "Near Eastern" (*vorderasiatisch*) and "oriental" (*orientalisch*) races; see for example Karin Magnussen, *Rassen-und bevölkerungspolitisches Rüstzeug: Statistik, Gesetzgebung und Kriegsaufgaben* (Munich, Berlin, 1943), 32; Albert Höft, *Rassenkunde, Rassenpflege und Erblehre im volksbezogenen lebenskundlichen Unterricht* (Osterwieck/Harz and Berlin, 1936), 159; Ernst Dobers, *Rassenkunde: Forderung und Dienst* (Leipzig, 1939), 95; Heinz Woltereck, ed., *Erbkunde, Rassenpflege, Bevölkerungspolitik: Schicksalsfragen des deutschen Volkes* (Leipzig, 1940), 145. The tension is reflected in an SS training brochure, Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiter-Partei. Schutzstaffel, *Rassenpolitik* (Berlin, 1942?), 8, which speaks on the same page of Jews as a "racial mixture," and as "race": "through its parasitical instincts the Jew keeps his race pure."

122. This analysis contrasts with that of leading Polish expert on German National Socialism Franciszek Ryszka, who writes that "every Pole by virtue of belonging to a definite breed [*gatunek*]" became an "enemy" of Germany. *U źródeł sukcesu i kleski: Szkice z dziejów hitleryzmu* (Warsaw, 1972), 129.

123. Race expert Prof. Günther said after completing a ten-day trip in Danzig-Westpreussen that four-fifths of the Poles in the North could be germanized. See the conversations from 12 May 1942 in Picker, *Tischgespräche*, 286–88. Indeed, many hundreds of thousands of Poles in the annexed regions were made into Germans by the institution of the *Volkslisten* during the war. For exact figures and a discussion of the four varieties of the *Volksliste*, see Madajczyk, *Die Okkupationspolitik*, 458, 469.

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The practical consequence was compromise with the Slavs, refusal to compromise with the Jews.[124] The German occupiers began yielding ideological ground to the non-Jewish "racially mixed" population in Soviet territories soon after entering them. The cases of Ukrainian and Cossack SS units have been mentioned. In 1941 Hitler had given strict orders that Russians were not to be used as soldiers, yet by the end of the war tens of thousands were fighting on the German side. The breakdown of his injunction was gradual and opportunistic: first German troops (esp. NCO's) began using Russian POW's as helpers and servants of all kinds, for cooking, carrying ammunition, clearing mines. They learned that if one gave them proper rations they worked better. As early as 1941 these *Hilfswillige* were used for guard and police functions, then as soldiers.[125] Beginning in 1943, the Nazis had begun offering grants of *Lebensraum* to "eastern soldiers"—many of them Russian—who had distinguished themselves in service.[126] These compromises were necessitated by the thinness of the German military and administrative presence, which hardly permitted contact with the local population, let alone governance.[127] The use of supposed "subhumans" as soldiers increased as the situation on Germany's many fronts became more desperate, and the killing of Jews accelerated.

What if the Nazis had won the war? All available evidence suggests that massive use of Slavic peoples, as labor of all sorts, would have continued, precisely because of the assumption that Slavs were potentially "useful." In 1940 a confident Himmler had predicted that Slavs would become a "leaderless work force . . . and be called upon, under the strict, consistent, and fair direction of the German people, to help in the construction of its eternal cultural deeds and monuments, and perhaps, in view of the amount of unskilled labor required, make these things possi-

124. On the racially based differences in the treatment of Jews and Slavic populations, see Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners*, 312–15, 469–71.

125. Dallin, *German Rule*, 533–44. Omer Bartov has detailed the escalating compromises in the operations of the German 18th Panzer Division, which began using local "*Hilfskräfte*" in May 1942, within two months had established armed "volunteer" units to guard lines of communication, and in August set up "self-defence" units in villages it controlled. By December two companies of over 300 Russians were invloved in "security" operations. In August of 1943 the division numbered 7,415 German soldiers and 1,053 *Hiwis*. Bartov, *Eastern Front*, 138–39. In 1942 a self-administering area behind the front was created near Lokot, with no German occupying forces, which organized the local economy, deliveries to the Germans, and also antipartisan forces. By the end of 1942 these forces totaled over 10,000 men, and were the beginning of the so-called Russian Popular Army of Liberation. Schulte, *The German Army*, 172–79.

126. Between 21 April and 20 May 1943, 172 Russians serving in police military units, or with the civil administration, received land grants of one to seven hectares. Alarmed at this report, Himmler stipulated that the number of Eastern nationals in German service receiving land would not be greater than 2 percent (about 24,000) of their number each year. Mulligan, *The Politics of Illusion*, 154.

127. Chiari, "Deutsche Zivilverwaltung."

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ble in the first place."[128] Millions of foreign workers were planned for yearly planting and harvests.[129] In October 1943 the SS leader said in a secret speech in Poznań in reference to the Russian area: "If we treat it properly, we can mine endless quantities of value and energy from the human mass of this Slavic people." A future was imagined in which the Germans would "understand how to govern foreign peoples numbering a hundred million at least as well as the English do today."[130] Hitler too had referred to the future regime in Eastern Europe as approximating that of the English in India.

When attempting to imagine a Nazi victory, historians tend to think of the Nazi state as all-powerful, somehow relieved of its endemic confusion of competences, and a hostile surrounding world. But Nazi planners anticipated many challenges in realizing their projects for a postwar world. The greatest difficulty would simply be to find colonists: not only for Bohemia and Moravia, but for all of Poland, the Baltic states, much of Ukraine and Russia, and the Crimea. Experiences during the war did not inspire confidence in the practicability of settling many tens of millions in an area inhabited by over 100 million people: only a few hundred thousand "Germans" were found for the rather limited task of settling western Poland—and most of these had been taken from Ukraine and Russia to begin with! They continued a decades-old tradition of German migration to economically more developed western areas, for example from Silesia to Berlin and the Ruhr.[131]

Precisely because West Germans were imbued with stereotypes of a culturally inferior East, German authorities in the East would need to attract settlers there, and they knew this.[132] The Nazi leadership counted

128. From his "Thoughts on the Treatment of the Alien Population in the East," May 1940, in Ackermann, *Himmler*, 300.

129. From Himmler's thoughts on "future German peasant settlements," 24 June 1940, ibid., 303.

130. Wenn man dieses slawische Volk richtig behandelt, kann man aus der Masse Mensch unendliche Werte herausholen und unendliche Kräfte schaffen." Cited in ibid., 292–94.

131. For German population losses from Silesia until 1939 see Andrzej Brożek, *Ostflucht na Śląsku* (Katowice, 1966). Between 1939 and 1945 approximately 400,000 "ethnic Germans" were settled in areas of Poland that had been attached to the Reich. Of these over 90 percent came from areas further East in Poland, the Baltic states, the Bukovina, and Bessarabia. Robert L. Koehl, *RKFDV: German Resettlement and Population Policy 1939–1945* (Cambridge, MA, 1957), 254. On the impracticality of Himmler's programs of resettlement in the East, even in the event of victory against the Soviet Union, see idem, 227–28. One major attempt to settle "Germans" in the Zamość region in Poland in 1942/43 ended in failure, because of massive Polish resistance, including the killing of new settlers, and the refusal of some of the supposed *Volksdeutsche* (Alsatians, Slovenians, and Luxemburgers) to move eastward. Czesław Madajczyk, *Generalna Gubernia w planach hitlerowskich. Studia* (Warsaw, 1961), 111–86.

132. See for example Walter Geisler, *Der deutsche Osten als Lebensraum für alle Berufsstände* (Berlin, Prague, Vienna, 1941); Walter Geisler, *Deutscher! Der Osten ruft Dich!* (Berlin,

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on the additional "Germanic people" from Norway, Holland, and England, but also the descendants of Germans who had once migrated to Africa and America.[133] Still, the most optimistic projection (ca. 1942) of a situation decades in the future left SS planners millions of settlers behind plan, even when they imagined that the fourteen million "germanizable" Eastern Europeans would be left in the East, and not moved to central Germany, as a strict adherence to racial guidelines would have required.

The pressures for plan fulfillment necessitated compromise. Because relatively few Germans could be spared for the vast territories Germany was to control, administrators would be procured from elsewhere: from the peoples judged to lie racially between the Germans and the Russians (*Mittelschicht*): Latvians, Estonians, and even Czechs.[134] Because of its high level of socioeconomic development, Germany's birthrate was in decline; and in order to forestall "national suicide," it would have to develop industry in the lands further east that were not scheduled for German settlement, for example in the Baltic area and parts of the Ukraine, in order to drive down birthrates there as well.[135] But most importantly, there would have to be a reassessment of how much Germanic blood resided in the East. Director of the Advisory Board (*Beratungsstelle*) of the Office of Racial Politics of the NSDAP, Dr. Erhard Wetzel, complained of racial standards for judging Slavs that were so strict that even populations in Germany would not meet them, and suggested a more liberal application, as well as attempts to attract people to "Germandom," for example by giving members of the intelligentsias positions of responsibility in the Reich—like state officials and university teachers. If not treated properly, these "valuable" elements woud remain hostile to Germany.

Final judgments, even on Russian racial "value," had yet to be made. Professor at the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Institute for Anthropology in Berlin, Wilhelm Abel, "discovered" in 1942 that Russians consisted of Nordic types to a higher degree than previously thought, and Wetzel suggested transferring

1941); Walter Lorenz, *Die handwerkliche Ansiedlung im Reichsgau Danzig-Westpreussen* (Berlin, 1941); Fritz Arlt, *Siedlung und Landwirtschaft in den eingegliederten Gebieten Oberschlesiens* (Berlin, 1942).

133. On 17 October 1941 Hitler told his dinner companions, including Sauckel and Todt, that the German settlers would come "not only from the Reich, but above all from America; they would also come from Scandinavia, Holland, and Flanders." Madajczyk, ed., *Vom Generalplan Ost*, 23.

134. See Wetzel's report from 7 February 1942 of a "discussion in the Reich Ministry for the Occupied Territories on Questions of germanization, especially of the Baltic Lands," including representatives of the Reichsführer SS, the Reich Commissariat for Strengthening German Volkstum, and the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Institute for Anthropology (Prof. Eugen Fischer), in Madajczyk, ed., *Vom Generalplan Ost*, 40.

135. For these more conventional responses to the problems of "overpopulation," see the "thoughts" of Dr. Erhard Wetzel on the Generalplan Ost of 27 April 1942 in ibid., 57.

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these several million Russians directly into the Reich, where they could replace "unwanted workers from the south and southeast of Europe," and gradually mix with the Germans. In the case of the Poles, policies were determined not so much by racial considerations, as by the recognition that this was the people "most hostile" to Germany. They would have to be dispersed over regions of Siberia, and encouraged to emigrate to South America, perhaps in exchange for Germans living there. Neither in the case of Poles nor Russians could the leading Nazi planners advocate "liquidation." The reasons were of a practical nature. Wetzel wrote in his "thoughts" on the Generalplan Ost of 27 April 1942:

> It should be obvious that the Polish question cannot be solved by liquidating the Poles in the way the Jews are being liquidated. Such a resolution of the Polish question would weigh upon the German people deep into the future, and cost us sympathies everywhere, because neighboring peoples would have to figure on being dealt with the same way, when their time came.[136]

Dr. Hans Ehlich, expert on Volkstum at the RSHA, wrote in December 1942 that the fate of 70 million people in the East could not be decided by "total physical destruction . . . because we would never have enough people to even come close to replacing these 70 million."[137]

During the war the Nazis did not approach the complete destruction of those parts of Slavic populations supposedly slated for immediate destruction: the intelligentsia. Hitler had said in the fall of 1940 that "all members of the Polish intelligentsia must be killed,"[138] but the wartime losses of members of the Polish intelligentsia—including Jews—amounted to 57 percent of all lawyers, 39 percent of all physicians, 29.5 percent of all university teachers; and in general 37.5 percent of all Polish citizens with higher education.[139] Many of the 20,000 Polish officers captured by the Germans in 1939 belonged to the intelligentsia, but the Nazis did not attempt to kill them off, though they remained in POW camps throughout the war.[140]

136. The original reads: "Dass man die Polenfrage nicht in dem Sinne lösen kann, dass man die Polen, wie die Juden, liquidiert, dürfte auf der Hand liegen. Eine derartige Lösung der Polenfrage würde uns überall die Sympathien nehmen, zumal auch die anderen Nachbarvölker damit rechnen müssten, bei gegebener Zeit ähnlich behandelt zu werden." Madajczyk, ed., *Vom Generalplan Ost*, 63.

137. Die Behandlung des fremden Volkstums, Referat des SS-Standartenführers Dr. Ehlich, Reichssicherheitshauptamt, auf der Tagung des Volkspolitischen Reichsreferats der RSF am 10./11. Dezember 1942 in Salzburg," in Der "*Generalplan Ost*," ed. Rössler and Schleiermacher, 49.

138. Gross, *Polish Society*, 75.

139. Tomasz Szarota, "Upowszechnienie kultury," in Franciszek Ryszka, ed., *Polska ludowa 1944–1950: Przemiany społeczne* (Wrocław, 1974), 411–12.

140. University teachers among the Polish prisoners of war even organized higher education

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The central difference to the Jewish case is obvious: the Nazis could imagine the Slavs as useful. The case of the Gypsies, or Sinti and Roma, falls somewhere between these two. As in the case of the Slavs, Sinti and Roma had played a marginal role in Nazi thinking, and are not mentioned at all in *Mein Kampf* or the records of Hitler's conversations with close aids. Like Slavs, Gypsies were differentiated. Certain Gypsies (full-blooded) were thought racially valuable, because of their supposed derivation from "Aryan stock." Unlike Jews, the Nazis never precisely defined what a "Gypsy"—or the true target of persecution, a "Gypsy half-breed" (*Zigeunermischling*)—was.[141] The difference in thought was reflected in action: there was no Europe-wide manhunt for every last Gypsy:

Country	% Gypsies killed (Based on 1939 population)	% Jews killed (Based on pre-Final Solution population)
Poland	70	90
Germany/Austria	69	90
Czech lands	50	89
Slovakia	12.5	83
Holland	100	75
Hungary	28	70
Belgium	84	60
Rumania	12	50

From: Donald Kenrick and Grattan Puxon, *The Destiny of Europe's Gypsies* (London, 1971), 183–84; Lucy S. Dawidowicz, *The War Against the Jews 1933–1945* (New York, 1986), 403.

For the Nazis, the Jews were not a race among races. They were the race that destroyed (*zersetzen*) race, the very substance of human existence.[142] There was a uniquely metaphysical dimension in the Nazi hatred

in the camps Woldenberg, Gross Born, Edelbach, and Murnau with partial knowledge of the Germans. The prisoners collected libraries of many thousands of volumes; in Woldenberg alone 20,000 scholarly and 30,000 popular books. Some 1,200 prisoners attended the courses in Woldenberg. In Edelbach Polish and French scholars had been permitted to coorganize a Université française de captivité. Stanisław Mauersberg, "Nauka i szkolnictwo wyższe w latach 1939–1951," in *Historia Nauki Polskiej*, ed. Bogdan Suchodolski, vol. 5, part 1 (Wrocław, 1992), 381–83. For a description of university courses, as well as the hardships of life in these camps, see also Walczak, *Szkolnictwo*, 173–78.

141. See Zimmermann, *Rassenutopie*, 372–73; Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution*, 220–21.

142. *Rassenpolitik*, 8–9 (see n. 121); Fester, "Das Judentum."

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of Jews: Jews were the anti-race; or, as Hitler is supposed to have said to Hermann Rauschning, "the Jew is the anti-man, the creature of another god . . . He is a creature outside nature and alien to nature."[143] Even after the Jewish question in Europe had been "solved,"[144] thoughts of Jews continued to vex Hitler: in February 1945 he told Martin Bormann that there was no such thing as a Jewish race "from the genetic point of view," but that Jews were "a spiritual race."[145] Indeed, discussions of Jews had always transcended the categories of racial "science." It was beside the point to attempt to measure the amount of Indo-European or Near Eastern blood present in Jews; and to imagine "blond and blue-eyed" Jews becoming German was simply absurd.[146] The dangers emanating from Jews defied the evidence of the senses. Dr. Walter Gross, head of the Nazi Party's Office of Racial Politics, justified the exclusion of Jewish children from schools because of their "invisible influence" on the "soul" of German children.[147]

Unlike policies toward the Slavs, or toward any other identifiable human group, policies toward the Jews were an end in themselves. Read backward, the final solution to the "Jewish question" appears as the logical culmination of an essential ideological predisposition, whereas policies toward Slavs appear as constant improvisation, in which opportunity and ideology shaped one another.[148] The absolute dominance of ideological considerations—whether or not Nazi leaders knew from the beginning precisely where they would lead—accounts for the total and uncompromising nature of the final solution of the Jewish question. There was but one attempt to destroy the whole of a people, there was but one Holocaust.[149]

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143. *The Voice of Destruction*, 241–42. On the metaphysical and mystical character of Nazi anti-Semitism, see Katz, "The Holocaust," 56–63; Erich Goldhagen, "Weltanschauung," 379–405.

144. Such at least was the view of Heinrich Himmler. Hilberg, *Destruction*, 252.

145. John Lukacs, *The Hitler of History* (New York, 1997), 123.

146. Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution*, 221.

147. Erich Goldhagen, "Weltanschauung," 387.

148. Erich Goldhagen has described the theory of a "Jewish conspriracy" as the "core of the constitutive myth of the National Socialists." Ibid., 380.

149. "Holocaust" is derived from the Greek holokaustos: holos (whole) and kaustos (burnt). *Webstar's New Collegiate Dictionary* (Springfield, MA, 1960), 394.

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